

*Seek and you shall Find :*  
OR, A  
S E A R C H  
Into the GROUNDS of  
**RELIGION:**  
Together with some  
Q U E R I E S  
IN ORDER  
To a Particular Satisfaction,  
Upon Account of the various  
OPINIONS in this present AGE.

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*Quæretis me & invenietis, cum quaesieritis me in toto corde vestro. Jer. 29. 13.*

You shall seek me and you shall find me, when you seek me with your whole heart. *Jer. 29. 13.*

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*Permissu Superiorum.*

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the King's Most Excellent Majesty for His  
Household and Chappel. 1686.

The whole strength of this  
Booke, lyes upon Rome's being  
ye Catholick Church, which is  
perfectly impossible, for all  
ye World acknowledg<sup>e</sup> Rome is  
a particular place, so Roman-  
Catholick, must needes signifie a  
particular Universall, which is playne  
Nonsense.

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TO THE  
READER.

**T**Here is no Man certainly, who has any Sence of Religion, or Concern for Christianity, but must feel his Soul sensibly touched with Sorrow, when he reflects upon the variety of Sects and Opinions, which are now in the World; and calls to mind the Dismal Effects which a Division in Religion has produced. Unity is the Band of Religion, the Spirit of Christianity, and the distinctive Sign of that One Church which God, who is One in Trinity, has established as a Society, in which true Faith, which also is but One, is Preached, true Virtue Practised, and in which Salvation is onely to be Expected.

The Old Testament, as interpreted by the Fathers, speaks of this Unity of the Church :  
My Dove, my Undeiled is One. There Cant. 6. 9.  
shall be one Pastour of them all; they Ezech. 37.  
shall walk in my Judgments, and shall keep 24.

## To the READER.

my Commandments, and do them.

*Our Blessed Saviour tells us in the New*

John 10. 16. *Law, That he has chosen one Fould, and one Pastour : And he prayed to his Father,*

John 17. 11. *not onely that his Disciples might be One, as he and his Father were One; but also that*

v. 20. *they who should believe in him, through their word, might be also One ; and uses this Argument or Reason why he begs it of*

v. 21. *his Father , that the world may believe that thou has sent me. The Apostles also*

Act. 4. 32. *tell us, not onely that the multitude of Believers, had one Heart and one Soul ; that they were one Body , as many as participa-*

1 Cor. 10. *ted of one Bread ; one Body under one*

17. Eph. 1. 22, *Head, Christ : But exhorted them all to*

23. *speak one thing , that there might be no*

1 Cor. 1. 10. *Schisms amongst them, but that they might be perfect in one sence, and one judgment ;*

*and commanded them to observe those who make divisions and offences , contrary to the Doctrine which they had been taught ;*

Rom. 16. *and to avoid them, as persons who seek not Jesus Christ , but their own Belly ; and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.*

v. 18.

*If*



## To the READER.

*If we look also into the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church ; we shall see how consensaneous their Notions of a Church, and the Unity of it, are to these express Texts ; and the punishments they threaten to them , who cause Schisms or Divisions in a Church , or continue them when begun.*

We ought rather to endure any torments, *says St. Denis of Alexandria*, than consent to the Division of God's Church, since the Martyrdom to which we expose our selves, by hindring a division of the Church, is no less glorious than that which is suffered for refusing to Sacrifice to Idols. *Enseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 35.*

Do they think (*says St. Cyprian*) Christ is amongst them , when they are assembled out of the Church of Christ ? No , though they were drawn to Torments and Execution for the Confession of the Name of Christ, yet this pollution is not washed away, no not with Blood, this inexpressible and inexcusable Crime of Schism, is not purged away even by Death it self. That man cannot be a Martyr, that is not in the Church. *De Unit. Eccl. Read the whole Treatise.*

*And with him St. Chrysostom tells us*, We shall not merit a less-cruel punishment, if we *Ibid.*

## To the READER.

*Chrysoſt.* ad we divide the Unity and Plenitude of the  
*Eph. Hom.* Church (*the Myſtical Body of our Lord*)  
 11. than they have done, who mangled and  
 tore his own Body.

*Aug. de* For this cauſe (*ſays St. Auguſtine*) our  
*Symb. ad* Chriſtian Creed concludes with the Arti-  
*Cath. l. 4.* cle touching the Church ; becauſe if any  
*c. 10.* man be found ſeparated from her, he ſhall  
 be excluded from the number of Children,  
 neither ſhall he have God for his Father,  
 who would not have the Church for his Mo-  
 ther. It will nothing profit ſuch a one,  
 that he hath been Orthodox in Belief, or  
 done ſo many good Works , without this  
 concluſion of the Sovereign Good.

*Epift. 48.* *And to the Donatiſts he ſays,* You are with  
*Item in Pf.* us in Baptiſm in the Creed, and in the other  
 54 Sacraments of the Lord, but in the Spirit of  
 Unity, in the Bonds of Peace, and finally in  
 the Catholic Church, you are not with us.

*Serm. Super* *And in another place :* A man may have  
*Geſta cum* all things out of the Catholic Church, be-  
*Emerito,* ſides Salvation. He may have Faith, Ba-  
*Lib. 1. de* ptiſm, and the reſt of the Sacraments ; he  
*Bapt. c. 49.* may have the Word of God ; he may be-  
*Epift. 48.* lieve and preach in the Name of the Father,  
*ad Vincenti-* Son , and Holy Ghoſt ; he may diſtribute  
*um. Et ali-* his  
*bi paſſim.*

## TO the READER.

his Substance to the Poor, and give his Life for the Name of Christ; onely Salvation he can find no where but in the Catholic Church.

*Lastly, the whole Body of Christians acknowledge the Essential Marks of the Church, to be those mentioned in the Nicene Creed; amongst which, Unity is the first.*

*From all which it manifestly appears, that without this Unity, Salvation, which is the end we ought all to tend to, cannot be expected.*

*And yet we see (and I cannot but with grief express it) that notwithstanding all these Prophecies, Promises, Commands, Threatnings, Prohibitions, and Professions of our Faith, the Spirit of Discord, has been let loose amongst Christians; a Division has been made in the Church, by the Craft and Cunning of Satan; and our Breaches are become so wide, by the false Zeal of some, and Malice of others, that nothing but a Miracle can now close them.*

*How then does it behove all those who have any concern for the Salvation of their Souls, to lay aside all Heats and Animosities, and study how to obtain this Unity? How does it behove them to seek for that Assembly of Christians, which has the most efficacious*  
means

## To the READER.

*means to maintain it, and by consequence can alone challenge it? How does it bebove them, having found that Body, to unite themselves as Members to it? and how earnestly ought they to pray to God, to enlighten their Eyes to see that Church of his, which is One and Undeiled, which is One and Catholic, One and Apostolic, and shall continue One to the end of the World, seeing he has promised, who can fulfil it, That the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*

*That there is a Schism amongst Christians, a breach of Unity, is but too apparent; That Schism is a dangerous Sin, which unrepented of, will inevitably bring Damnation, is also manifest; that every slight occasion will not justifie a Separation from the whole Church, or any part of it, but only such Errours as are inconsistent with Salvation, is clear also from the nature of Schisme; and that the Catholick Church cannot give any just occasion for a Separation by such Damnable Errours, is not only the assertion of the most moderate and Learned Protestants, grounded upon her other essential mark her Sanctity, but also of the Antient Fathers, who tell us, That Falshood cannot have access to the Roman Church,*

DD. Field,  
White a-  
pud Cath.  
Doctrines  
no Novel-  
ties.  
Archbish.  
Lawd Con-  
fer. Sect. 37.  
Numb. 3.  
Sect. 21. n. 5.  
Ibid.  
S. Cypr.  
Epist. 55 ad  
Cornel.

## To the READER.

Church, which is the Chair of St. Peter, and whence the Unity of Priesthood has sprung ; *ben. lib. 4. c. 62.*  
*and that there cannot possibly be made any Reformation, of such importance as the mischief of Schism is pernicious. We cannot then but clearly see it is our Duty to seek out this Church, out of whose Communion we cannot be safe, and upon whose Authority we may rely.*

*The first pretended Reformers acknowledge ,* *Calvin. Epist. ad Melancthon. Hospinian Epist. 141. See the Manual of Controversie, Art. 2.*  
*that they separated from the whole World ; and those who liv'd near that beginning, durst not deny it ; and if they had, it might have been easily proved against them: For to what Assembly of Christians did they joyn , that was then extant in the World ?*

*Others of a later date tell us, they separated only from a part of the Church, and not from the whole : But was not that part in Communion with the whole ? and was not their Breach of Unity with that part (by consequence) a Separation from the whole, of which that was a part ?*

*A third sort tells us, they separated only from the Errors which were crept into the Church, but not from the Church her self ; and here they run into an Ocean of Controversie ; and in each particular Dispute, care not how they bespatter the Immaculate Sponse of Christ, so they can but*  
a
make

## TO the READER.

*make an apparent shew of justifying their pretended Reformation. But certainly all is not Error that is pretended ; and Jesus Christ, who promised his Apostles, and their Successors, that he would send them the Holy Ghost the Comforter, who should remain with them to the end of the World, and teach them all Truth, has performed his Promise, and secured his Church from such Errours as would justify the breach of Union, which has followed from this pretended Reformation.*

*But what if the Church be calumniated, and the erroneous Doctrines which are laid to her charge, be none of her Tenets ? What if her Faith be Misrepresented, and she her self injured (as certainly she is) what if all our Divisions come only from a want of knowing upon what solid grounds her Faith is built, and by what method she is secured from Error ? In this case, the onely way certainly to heal our Breaches, would be, 1. To represent her Doctrines truly as they are in themselves, without any mixture of the Opinions of private persons ; and, 2. To endeavour to propose the Grounds upon which she builds her Faith, and the Methods she makes use of to seek for Truth.*

*The*

## To the READER.

*The first has been done of late by several hands; and though all the Art and Industry imaginable is used to hinder the good Effect intended by it, yet are the Eyes of many Sincere Persons opened, and they are ashamed of the Licentiousness of the Press and Pulpit.*

*Vernon's  
Rule of  
Faith.  
Bishop of  
Meaux Ex-  
position.  
Papist Re-  
presented  
and Misre-  
presented.*

*The latter, according to the best method and manner I could, I have here undertaken. If the Grounds I have laid down, please not, I desire those who dislike them, to establish others more solid, before they go about to destroy these: But if, instead of that, they should fly out into wild Excursions, or undecent Railings, I will not follow them: For this Discourse was not designed to revive our Controversies, much less to exasperate any; but only to lay down some clear Methods, by which the Simple, as well as the Judicious, may come to the Knowledge of Truth, and the Band of Unity; without which, there is no Salvation.*

*To make the whole more clear and profitable, I have in one Margent given the Scope of the whole Discourse in short, and in the other, I have referred to some passages in Scripture, or places in Catholic Authors, where those things which require further Elucidation, and are contested by our Adversaries, are clearly proved, and to which every*



## TO the READER.

*every one may (in case of Dis-satisfaction) have recourse, at pleasure. Wherefore I earnestly desire, that no one would condemn what I assert in those Queries, till he has, with an impartial Eye, read those places, and thoroughly weighed them. I beg also of every one (into whose hands this may chance to come) to read it with the Spirit of Christianity; that is, with Humility, Meekness, and Charity, and with a desire to seek after Truth, upon which the Salvation of his Soul depends. And if he thus, laying aside all Partiality, and calming his Affection (byassed it may be by Education or Interest) search with Sincerity, and accompany that search with a sorrow for his past Offences, a new Life, and fervent Prayer, he need not fear but the God of Truth will enlighten his Mind to see it, and give him Grace to captivate his Understanding in obedience to it; which that he may efficaciously perform, is the hearty Prayer of the Author, who as he has a real Zeal for the Salvation of Souls, and a Desire to bring back those who are wandered astray, into the Fould of the Church; so as a true Member of the same, he submits this, and all his other Writings, to her Unerring Censure.*

*Seek*



*Seek and you shall Find :*

O'R, A

Search into the Grounds of

# R E L I G I O N.

**R**eligion, according to the common notion of it, being a Vertue by which a due Worship and Reverence is pay'd to God, as the Author and Conserving of our Beings; it necessarily follows, that all Religion is founded upon this one Truth, That *there is a God*. This belief of the Existence of a Deity, is so rooted in all mens minds, that not onely we who are Christians consent thereto; but even those few Monsters in Nature, who would willingly extinguish the notion of a Deity, find it so deeply printed in their minds, that their Consciences, after all their vain endeavours, fly in their faces and check their folly.

*Tul. lib. 2. de  
Inventione  
Paulo ante fi-  
nem.  
S. Thom. 22.  
qu. 81. Conc.*

This then I suppose as my first Ground, That *there is a God*.

The second is no less deeply imprinted in the Minds of men: That this God is to be Adored, Served, and Worshipped (under the penalty of incurring his displeasure) by every Intellectual Creature to whom he has given a Being, and in whose mind he has imprinted this knowledge of Himself.

And seeing God is a *Spirit*, he must be worshipped in *Spirit*, and being Truth it self, he must be also worshipped in *Truth*: And therefore I think it will in the third place be granted me, That the Worship which God exacts from Man, was not left to every mans wild

B

fancy

There is a  
God,

who must be  
adored and  
served:

fancy to invent, or every individual man left to frame a Worship according to his own private judgment; but that it was to be after one particular manner conformable to his Will; for otherwise, mens judgments being various, there would have been as many Religions in the world as men; and every one of these Religions, though as opposite as those Judgments, yet acceptable to Almighty God; which distraction in Religion is so inconsistent with Truth, which is but one, and the unity of Worship corresponding to the unity of a God, that they who affirm this wild assertion, must needs stand self-condemned; that is, cannot but experience the checks of a seduced Conscience: or else must acknowledge themselves to have notions different from all mankind, who still associated themselves in some regular way of Worship common to many, and thought singularity in Religion to be a crime.

Not according to every mans wild fancy;

These Grounds being presupposed, as Truths consented to by all mankind, (except some few, whose licentious ways of living make them wish there were no other Religion but their Liberty, nor God to punish their wicked lives, but a feigned one) it necessarily follows, that God, who is All-merciful and Wise, would publish to his Creatures the method and manner how he would be Adored.

but after what manner it shall please him to reveal.

And God having thus once published his Will to Man, Man entred under a double Obligation: first, of believing all things so published by him; and secondly, of practising according to that belief.

To which Revelations man must assent,

Eph. 4. 4. &c.

These things so published (which we call Revealed Truths) are then the subject matter of our Faith, which Faith being grounded upon Gods veracity, it follows likewise, that this Faith can be but one: For God who is Truth it self, cannot reveal Contradictories, this thing to day, and its contrary to morrow; or this thing in this place, and the contradictory of it in another: So that it is equally pernicious to renounce with obstinacy any one point of revealed Truth, known to be such; and to teach that to be a revealed Truth, which is not actually so;

as to the object of his Faith; which Faith is but one, without which it is impossible to please God; and therefore

fo; the one being culpable for refusing to believe what God has taught; and the other for teaching, under the notion of a revealed Truth, what was not so revealed.

it is necessary he should institute a means by which we may come to this knowledge of what he revealed; which means must be visible and apparent to all, proportionable to the capacities of all, sure and certain to all.

But as it was necessary the Goodness of God should reveal to Man what he ought to believe and practice in order to his Service; so was it likewise necessary he should institute a general means by which man might come to the knowledge of what he had so revealed; otherwise to lay an injunction upon Man to believe and practice, under pain of damnation, and not to give him a rule and means to know what he had revealed in order to his belief and practice, would be to place Man in an impossibility of Salvation. But seeing his Justice and his Mercy would not permit him thus to command impossibilities, under the penalty of his displeasure; it was also necessary that he who would have all men saved, and come to the knowledge of his Truth, should in order to that design, make this general way and means of coming to the knowledge of what he had so revealed, \* visible and apparent to all, † proportionable to the capacities of all; ‡ sure and certain to all. To effect which, there are only two ways possible.

\* John 9. 41.  
† Mat. 11. 25,  
26. & 35. 8.  
‡ Mat. 16. 18.  
John 14. 16,  
&c. 16. 13.  
Mat. 18. 18.  
& seq.

This means is  
not

First, Either only by a particular Revelation to every individual person.

Or, Secondly, by a revelation to some particular persons, who must be authorized by him to publish to others what he revealed to them; which persons so authorized, must shew the Letters-Patents of their Authority: I mean some Supernatural Signs, by which all persons may be assured they were thus inspired and taught by God.

John 15. 24.

particular in-  
spiration, to  
every individ-  
ual person.

That the first alone is not the general means which God makes use of, appears sufficiently from the diversity of Opinions which are in the world, even in matters of Faith and Religion; God and Eternity; Heaven and Hell: And yet a Revelation pretended for every Tenet.

John 14. 14.

Mark 16. 15,  
16.

Ibid.

It must therefore be the second means which is generally made use of by God; that is, He has revealed his will to particular persons, [his Prophets and Apostles] and has given them the gift of Miracles, as the Letters- Patents of their Authority, obliging them to declare to others what they learn'd from him; and others to believe what, after such confirmation, they declare.

But these persons to whom he has thus revealed his Will, being obliged to publish unto others the Truths so revealed, and the Practices so commanded; they can do it only one of these three ways. First, by Discourse or Preaching alone. Secondly, by Writing alone; or thirdly, by both Preaching and Writing.

And as an obligation lies upon them to divulge to all persons, what God has revealed to them for the direction of all; so are all persons to whom they do divulge them, obliged to give an assent to their Testimony thus confirm'd by Miracles. And amongst those who are thus taught by them to whom God first revealed his Will, either all and every person must be equally oblig'd to declare to their Posterity what they had been thus taught; or some particular persons must be set apart by God to teach and instruct others, under a particular obligation; which persons are called Pastors and Teachers: or else God must be oblig'd in every Age and Place to renew those his Revelations, and give the gift of Miracles to some persons who may in that Age and Place instruct others.

That God does not make use of this last means of perpetual Miracles and repeated Revelations, is manifest to every one. And that all persons should be equally obliged to hand down all these Truths, and to teach others, would be inconsistent with the different Employments and Capacities of men: It remains then, that an obligation is particularly laid upon Pastors and Teachers to Teach these Truths, and upon others to believe them so teaching.

But seeing mans nature is prone to wickedness, it will undoubtedly happen that some either through Ignorance, who being sinful men, their Doctrine must be try'd

but a revelation on to some particular persons, [Prophets and Apostles,] accompanied with the gift of Miracles; which persons are obliged to propagate this Faith, either by Preaching, Writing, or both; and all persons are obliged to believe them: and some must be set apart to hand down these Truths to Posterity under different obligations; amongst which the chief are Pastors and Teachers;

ignorance, Malice, or Ambition, may endeavour to impose falſities and uncertainties upon others inſtead of revealed Truths; upon which account it is neceſſary that God Almighty ſhould appoint a clear, eaſie, and ſecure means, by which thoſe falſities may be diſtinguiſhed from revealed Truths; which can be effected by no other means, but either by an inſallible Writing, clearly explicating all thoſe Truths, [to which as to a Touchſtone, all thoſe Paſtors and Teachers muſt be brought to be tryed]: or elſe by an Inſallible Judge or Court of Judicature, to whoſe Sentence all perſons muſt be obliged to ſtand.

not by Scri-  
pture alone,

If ſuch a Writing be pretended, it is manifeſt it muſt contain all the Truths ſo revealed; and if it muſt be the ſole Judge, it muſt contain them alſo clearly, ſo that the moſt ignorant may eaſily comprehend the ſence of it, and ſee their obligation; otherwiſe the difficulty would be ſtill left undecided. We muſt be certain that either we have the true Original, or an exact Copy, not one neceſſary word left out or added: If it be a Tranſlation, we muſt be certain that the true ſence is fully and plainly expreſſed, according to the intention of the Revealer: We muſt be certain that we have the whole Writing, and that nothing of it has been loſt, leaſt ſome neceſſary Truth ſhould have been loſt with it: If any of theſe fail, the Writing is rendred incapable of being the ſole Determiner in Controverſies.

which cannot  
of it ſelf de-  
cide Contro-  
verſies,

That ſuch a Writing has been left is pretended by many; but ſeeing many alſo deny, that all Truths revealed were purpoſely and clearly written in it; and that it is apparent moſt of it was written upon emergent Occaſions, with Arguments againſt particular Sects ariſing at that time, rather than with expreſs Concluſions againſt all ſucceeding Errours. \* Seeing alſo part of it is acknowledged to be loſt, and that which remains has ſeveral Readings; that no Originals are now

\* *The Rabbins acknowledge this, Aben-Eſſra, Abarbinel,*

*and Levi ben Gerſon: As alſo the Ancient Fathers, Chryſoſt. Orig. Athanaſius, Auguſt, Eucherius. Learned Proteſtants alſo, as Beza in Epist. Jude, v. 14. Whitakerus Controv. 1. qu. 3. c. 14. And it appears from Scripture, Epist. Jude, v. 14 &c. Apud R. P. C. Fraſſenium diſquiſit. Biblicæ Lutet. Pariſ. 1692. lib. 3. c. 2. p. 448.*

extant;

extant; that we cannot be secure the Copies are without alterations, and that there are such various interpretations of the sense of it, and all of them pretended to be the true genuine sense; it is manifest this bare Writing, without some living Judge to interpret it, can never end Controversies, nor securely testify to us what we must adhere to, in case of difficulties arising from the meaning of the words.

It remains then necessary there should be some supreme Judge or Court of Judicature, amongst them who have embraced that Religion; to the Sentence of which every one must be obliged to submit, and consequently it must be secur'd from Error in it. Which Court of Judicature is a General Assembly of the Pastors and Teachers, or of as many of them as can come together from all parts of the Catholick Church; who being assisted by the Holy Ghost, are sincerely to declare what they have been always taught to have been of Faith in that Present Controversie.

but by the voice of the Church in her supreme Court of Judicature, a General Council,

Seeing therefore all these Pastors and Teachers, in their several Countries, ought to be faithful Witnesses and Promulgators of the Truths revealed, they are obliged to speak Truth under the eternal forfeiture of the favour of God Almighty, and the eternal punishments due to so heinous a Crime, as it would be to deny a Truth which they had been always taught to be a revealed Truth, or to impose upon the world as a revealed Truth, what they had not been taught ~~was~~ really so.

If then we seriously consider how the hopes of Happiness, and fears of eternal Damnation, are the two most powerful motives to those who rightly weigh them to make them speak Truth, we cannot imagine (even abstracting from the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost) that so many assembled from all parts of the world, should all combine together, to damn their own Souls and the Souls of their Posterity, by giving a wrong decision, known to them as such. Much less can we imagine that God, who as I said, expects we should serve him in his own way, would permit Falshood to have as many

which as a faithful witness is secured from Error by the assistance of Almighty God.

many prudential motives to the embracing of it, as Truth it self has ; or that he would permit an Errour in Faith, to obtain a quiet possession in the Church.

These grounds being laid down, all they who are desirous of eternal Salvation , which cannot be obtained without a true Faith, are desired seriously to consider these following Queries, which are most of them in pure matters of fact.

*Q U E R I E S in order to a satisfaction in Religion, upon account of the variety of Opinions in this present Age.*

God having created Man in a perfect state, Man fell from thence into a state of sin and damnation ; from whence he could not rise by his own force, but by the Mercy of God, and Merits of a Redeemer ;

1. **W**Hether God the first Mover, who remains unmoved, after having created Man in a perfect state, both as to Naturals and Supernaturals, did not command him, as a tryal of his Obedience, not to eat of the forbidden Fruit, and this under the penalty of Sin and Death, to be entailed for ever upon him and his Posterity ?

2. Whether after the transgression of this Command, Adam or his Posterity could possibly || raise themselves from the state of Sin and eternal Death, by their own natural power ? or whether being finite, and by consequence not able to make an infinite Satisfaction for an infinite Crime, against an infinite God, it was not absolutely necessary his Mercy should intervene ?

3. Whether this unbounded Mercy did not move him to send his † Son to take our Natures on him, and pay † our Ransom ; and, by suffering an ignominious Death upon the Cross, and shedding there his most precious Blood, remove the || Malediction which lay upon Mankind, and wash away his guilt ?

4. Whether † Man can possibly be saved without the application of these his Merits, Blood, and Passion ? and whether

which Merits must be applied, by

*Gen. 3.*

*|| Ps. 43. 8.  
Vulgat. S. Basil. in hunc locum.  
Heb. 10.*

*† John 3. 15,  
16, 17, 18.*

*|| Gal. 3. 13.*

*† 2 Cor. 6. 1.  
Acts 13. 46.  
Esa. 65. 2.*



whether the Laws and Rules which he has established for the application of them, must not be punctually observed under the penalty of losing the benefit of that Redemption?

5. Whether, over and above a due observance of the Law of Nature, or Moral Law, God did not also require some positive observances from us, as the means to apply these Merits of his Son; such as were Oblations, <sup>† Gen. 17. 10.</sup> Circumcision, <sup>† Math. 28. 9.</sup> &c. in the Old Law, <sup>Mark 16. 16.</sup> and Baptism and the other Sacraments in the New, and in both a Faith in Jesus Christ.

6. Whether God has not declared this Faith in Jesus Christ to be so absolutely necessary, that they who do <sup>\* Mark 16. 16.</sup> not believe in him, <sup>Hib. 11. 6.</sup> shall not be saved? and whether believing in him, and acknowledging him to be God, we are not also obliged to believe all the Truths which he taught, [when sufficiently declared to us to have been taught by him] and this under the penalty of forfeiting our part in him, as Infidels, and persons who calling his veracity in question, renounce also his Divinity, and by consequence deserve Damnation?

This follows from God's infinite Goodness and Justice.

7. Whether therefore God did not obliged himself to give us a sufficient means to come to the knowledge of those Truths which he taught, and Precepts which he enjoined? And whether this means was not a declaration of his Will to some particular persons, who were to be the External Proposers of those Truths to others; giving them some Authentick marks, by which they might be known to be truly sent by him, and to teach nothing but what he taught; that is, whether God did not in the Old Law teach us by his Patriarchs and Prophets, and in the New by his Son Christ Jesus, who taught his Apostles by word of mouth whilst he conversed with them, and after his Ascension, sent them the <sup>||</sup> Holy Ghost to teach them all Truth, and to remain with them and their Successors to the end of the world.

8. Whether therefore Jesus Christ having taught those Truths to his Apostles and Disciples whilst he lived with them; and after his sufferings sent the Holy Ghost to instruct

an obedience to the Rules & Laws established by him; amongst which, a Faith in Jesus Christ, & a readiness to believe all the Truths he taught, when sufficiently proposed to us, is absolutely necessary. Upon which account he obliged himself to establish a sufficient means to come to the knowledge of those Truths, which means is a particular revelation in the Old Law, and a teaching of the Apostles in the New; which Apostles, being taught by Christ himself and by the H. Ghost, and having the gift of Miracles bestowed upon them, as Authentick testimonies of their mission, were obliged to preach, and all persons were obliged to believe them.

<sup>||</sup> John 14. 16. 26.

<sup>Mark 28. 14.</sup>  
<sup>John 8. 28.</sup>  
<sup>Act. 1. 1.</sup>  
<sup>Joh. 14. 26. cap. 16. 13.</sup>



instruct them, and to teach them all Truths ; and given them the power of Miracles , as the testimony of their Mission, and of the truth of what they affirmed , they were not obliged to take some efficacious means to deliver those Truths to others, and teach those Practices? and whether all persons who heard them preach, and saw their Miracles , were not obliged to believe their Doctrines, and obey those Precepts, under pain of Damnation ?

*Mark 16. 17. 18.*

*Mark 16. 16.*

*Act. 1. 8. 3. 4. Psal. 19. 5.*

But the Apostles preached those very Truths in all Nations, without any alterations ; and those Truths were received and believed almost in all Nations, before they began to write, or their writings were collected into one body.

So that writing was not absolutely necessary, though convenient ; nor did the Apostles design to commit all the Truths to writing which they had been taught ; but onely to oppose Errors arising in their days.

9. Whether in order to the propagation of this Faith, the Apostles did not (after they had received the Holy Ghost) separate themselves, that they might preach the Gospel over the whole World? And whether they did not preach the self-same Truths in all places without any alteration, and oblige those that were converted by them to put them in practice?

10. Whether the Gospel of Jesus Christ was not spread almost over the face of the whole world, before the Apostles began to write, or at least before all the Scriptures were written? And whether it were not near 300 years before the Scriptures we now have, were all of them acknowledged to be of their writings, or were collected into one body, as Books of Divine Revelation?

*St. Matthew writ the first, 3 years, or thereabouts, after Jesus Christ's Ascension.*

11. Whether the Apostles took at first an efficacious means to propagate Christ's Doctrine, or no? And whether it was absolutely necessary that it should be committed to writing, or onely highly convenient?

*Nothing was committed to writing from the Creation of the world till Moses, but deliver'd by Tradition.*

12. Whether (and where) do the Apostles make mention, that they have committed to writing all and every the truths revealed to them, as either necessary or highly convenient for the Salvation of Mankind, for the Government of the Church, for the Confounding of Errors, and this expressly and designedly? Or whether it be not manifest that most of the New Testament was written upon emergent occasions, to oppose Errors which began to spring up in those days, like Tares amongst the Wheat? And whether there be not many things now practised amongst Christians, as highly convenient at least, if not necessary to the Salvation of

*The Apostles writ no Catechisms, but either historical Narrations or Epistles upon some particular occasions.*

C

Man.

Mankind, and the Government even of the Protestant Church, which are not expressly mentioned in Scripture; as the Baptism of Infants, the receiving of the blessed Sacrament fasting, keeping the first day of the Week instead of the last, the particular methods of governing the Church, administering the Sacraments, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, &c. And also whether there be not many things mentioned in the New Testament as practis'd, yea some commanded, by the Apostles, which are now abolished; as the abstaining from the eating of Blood, or things strangled, and the dipping or plunging and not onely sprinkling of persons Baptized, &c. And whether those things which are matters of practice, were not sufficiently promulgated and taught by use, though they were not written?

*All. 15. 20.*

*Mat. 28. 19. 3. 16.*

*2 Thess. 2. 14.*

*2 Tim. 1. 13.*

*1b. 2. 2.*

*2 Pet. 3. 16.*

13. Whether those Writings were not apt to be wrested into a contrary sense by the unlearned and the unstable, to their own damnation?

Which Writings being apt to be wrested into a wrong sense, no private persons, interpreting them by their own judgments, can be secure of the Truth of their Interpretations.

14. What security any particular persons, who undertake to interpret Scripture, have, that they are not of the number of those who thus wrest the Scriptures? that is, what security can they give that the sense which they put upon those holy Writings, is the very same which was intended by the Holy Ghost who dictated them? And whether there ought not to be something more than meer conjecture or presumption grounded upon fallible foundations, such as are skill in Languages, comparing places, &c.

15. Whether any security can be given, by any Protestant principle, that no corruptions are crept into the very Book it self, either by the negligence of Transcribers, or unskilfulness of Translators, or foisted in by Hereticks? Whether any security can be given, by any Protestant Principle, that the Canon used by Protestants is the right Canon; or that the Canon has not been turn'd into Apocrypha, and the Apocrypha into the Canon? And if no security can be given of any of these but by the constant Tradition and Testimony

Nor as private persons now know assuredly what is true Scripture, and what corrupted.

of

of the Church, why should not that Tradition and Testimony be admitted likewise for the interpretation of it, when different senses are put upon it? and why should we not rather stand to that sense which the Pastors and Teachers in all Ages, and in all places have given of it, confirmed also by the perpetual practice of the Church, than to new senses put upon the Words, which the Ancient Fathers never dreamed of, and therefore could not oppose?

Seeing then the Apostles did not onely deliver some of those Truths, which were revealed to them, in writing, but also others by word of mouth, and explicated in their Discourses what was difficult to be understood in their Writings, and established the practices which depended upon those Truths, and propagated them down to us, it will be convenient to enquire

2 Thes. 2. 14.  
2 Pet. 3. 16.

16. Whether the persons who heard the Apostles, saw their Writings, and were instructed by them in the exercises of the Christian Religion, upon which depended their Salvation, were not oblig'd (especially if appointed to instruct others) under pain of Damnation to deliver those very Truths, and teach those same necessary exercises to their Posterity, without any additions of their own, [unless it were of those Truths which followed by natural consequence from the others?] And whether the following Ages which did not see those Miracles wrought by the Apostles, nor heard them preach, were not obliged to believe the immediately preceding Ages, in those things which they delivered to them as coming from the Apostles?

2 Tim. 2. 2.

17. Whether an obstinate Contradiction of any one Truth thus delivered, either in the Writings or preachings of the Apostles, would not be injurious to the Divine Authority that dictated it; a calling in question of God's Veracity, or the Authority given to the Apostles; and consequently a sin which unrepented of, would infallibly bring damnation?

James 2. 10.

But seeing one of the Truths delivered by the Apostles is, that there will be Heresies, Schisms, and Divisions amongst Christians, who are notwithstanding ob-

1 Cor. 11. 18.  
1 Cor. 1. 10.

But these Truths thus committed to writing, being also explicated by the Preachings and Practices of the Apostles.

Those, who were appointed to succeed them, were obliged under pain of damnation to deliver them to their Posterity, without additions or alterations; and their Posterity was obliged to believe them,

and not obstinately to contradict any one Truth so delivered to them.

Tit. 3. 10.

bliged to note such as are the occasions of them, and to avoid conversing with them; it necessarily follows, that there must be some means instituted by which we may clearly, without difficulty, and securely know what is Heretical, and which Assemblies are Schismatical, to the end we may avoid them. And seeing that all Hereticks and Schismaticks that ever yet appeared in the Church, pretended Reason and Scripture for their Error or Separation, it will be requisite we enquire by what methods the Primitive Christians distinguished Heretical Doctrines from Orthodox Truths, and Schismatical Assemblies from the united Body of the Church. And

*See the Guide  
in Controversies,  
who has  
fully proved  
this point and  
all the follow-  
ing.*

18. Whether when difficulties did arise, either about matters of Faith or Discipline, it was not the Pastors of the Church in that Age, [who descended by an uninterrupted Succession from the Apostles in Faith and Communion] that did decide it, and by what method? And whether when Hereticks pleaded Reason and Scripture for their Errors, and would admit of no other Judge in their Controversies but the Scriptures, which they interpreted after their own sense, making it speak their sentiments by subtilty and art, ready to raise new doubts upon every refutation (which they might do to the worlds end, as appears by the *Arian* Heresie) whether, I say, in this case the Primitive Christians, and the Church at that time fought with them onely at their own weapons, dropping Texts with them, and glorying in a more clear explication? Or rather, whether they did not fly to a constant Tradition which had delivered that Doctrine, and the explication of those passages down from the Apostles to that time? And in case those obstinate Spirits would not admit there was such a Tradition, whether it was not the common custom of the Church to assemble the Pastors and Teachers either of that Country, or if that would not suffice, of the Universal Church, or as many of them as could be gathered together, and to enquire of them what they did believe in their respective Diocesses, or Countries, as an Article of Faith, or as a Doctrine delivered down to them,

*But in case of a  
dissent (as Heresies will be)*

*Scripture alone was not  
to be the Judge and  
Decider of  
those Controversies:*

*but universal  
Tradition  
was added as  
the best comment;  
and the Pastors and  
Teachers of  
the Church  
were to be  
Judges what  
was Universal  
Tradition,  
and what not,*

them, as taught by the Prophets or Apostles for a revealed Truth, and to pronounce Sentence according to their constant agreement?

But in case of a disagreement amongst those Pastors, it is not the less number of Inferiours,

But if amongst those Pastors their should happen to be a division, as there was in the time of *Arim.*

19. Whether Prudence (abstracting from the promise of God, *That the Gates of Hell should not prevail against his Church*) would not dictate it to be far more secure to

follow the much major and superiour part of the Catholick Church, than obstinately to follow the sentiments of some Dissenters grounding themselves onely upon fallible appearances? I say, abstracting from Christs promise that he would not suffer the Gates of Hell (that is, Heresie) to prevail against his Church: For though it be contrary to sence and reason, to imagine that such a powerful concurrence of hopes and fears could possibly happen at once in all Nations, as to

but the voice of the Catholick Church, speaking in a General Council of such Pastors and Teachers by the much major and superiour part, as faithful Witnesses of the Truth which must decide the Controversie.

compel the major and superiour part of the Pastors and Teachers in Gods Church; not onely, as I say, in one Country, but in all parts of the world [either assembled together or diffused] to declare that to be a Truth revealed by God, and delivered to them by their Predecessors as such, when in reality it was not so, and they also could not but know it; or to affirm that to have been the perpetually-received sence of Scripture, handed down to them by an uninterrupted Tradition, which they onely took up of themselves, and concluded of from their own force of Judgment, or skill in Languages, &c. [especially when they could not but know that to impose so upon others, would be a damnable crime in them, and be the occasion of the loss of so many Souls as should be seduced by that their false declaration: [Yet if we consider the Promise of Jesus-Christ, we must either pass such a sentence, or give him the Lye, and tell him that the Gates of Hell have (notwithstanding that his Promise) prevailed against his Church, and that Errour has more prudential motives to induce us to believe it, than the Truth which he revealed; which would be down-right Blasphemy. Examine also

20. Whe-

Which Church is secured from Errour in those decisions; by the Promises of Jesus-Christ.

*Necessity of  
Church-Guides*  
ch. 3, 4, 5.

*Guide in Con-  
troversie, Disc.*  
3. c. 3.

*Considerations  
upon the Coun-  
cil of Trent, by  
the Author of  
the Guide.*

20. Whether the Universal Church did not in all Ages practice this way of deciding Controversies by Pastors and Teachers? And whether in matters of Faith the decisions of such Assemblies or General Councils when they could be had, were not always esteemed obliging in the Church? And whether those particular Persons or Churches, who did obstinately gain-say those Decisions pronounced by the major and superiour part of the Church representative, and accepted of also by the much major part of the Church diffusive, were not always and are not now at present judged by all Christians, to have justly incurr'd those Anathema's pronounc'd against them?

21. Whether the constant practice of the Church in all Ages ever since the Apostles, does not shew there is as universal a Tradition for these necessary methods of deciding Controversies in order to the Peace and Union of the Church, as there is for any points of Doctrine or Discipline whatever universally received; yea, as there is for some of the Scriptures themselves? And whether when Heresies did spring up in any Age, they were not condemned either by the Bishops of Rome in those times of persecution, when General Councils could not be called (whose method was to send Circular Letters to the Pastors of other Countries, and to pronounce Sentence according to received Tradition:) Or secondly (after those persecutions were ceased) by the consent and sentence of the major part of those Pastors and Teachers assembled in a General Council, call'd and confirmed by the Bishop of Rome, as Supreme Pastor and Visible Head of the Church?

22. Whether the Church in examining the Novelties of Protestants, did not proceed after the self-same method? and after a particular examination, and condemnation of their Tenets in National Synods, assemble also as General a Council as that Age (all circumstances considered) could afford? And whether those Doctrines and Practices oppugned by the Protestants in this last Age, were not declared by the unanimous consent of those Pastors and Teachers assembled in the Council of Trent, to be Doctrines practically delivered down to them

To which decisions of General Councils, all persons in all Ages were obliged to submit, under pain of being cut off from being Members of the Church,

as the constant practice and universal Tradition of all former Ages manifest.

The same methods have been taken by the Church in examining later Novelties.

And a General Council call'd at Trent,



them by their Predecessors, as revealed by God to the Prophets and Apostles?

in which not  
only the Bi-  
shops there  
assembled de-  
clared

the Protestant  
Doctrines to  
be Novelties;  
but all the o-  
ther Bishops  
of the We-  
stern Church,  
except those  
few whose  
Doctrines  
were condem-  
ned by that  
Council, con-  
sented to it,

acknowledg-  
ing the Do-  
ctrines op-  
pugned by  
Protestants,  
to have been  
most of them  
defined in  
former Ge-  
neral Coun-  
cils, and ac-  
cepted of by  
the generality  
of Christians,  
and universal-  
ly practised, as  
revealed  
Truths,

by the much  
major part of  
Christians at  
this day

23. Whether not onely all the Pastors and Teachers assembled in the Council of *Trent* (especially at the close of it, there being present at that time four Legates, two Cardinals, three Patriarchs, twenty five Archbishops, one hundred and sixty eight Bishops, seven Abbots, thirty nine Procurators for those who were absent, and seven Generals of Orders; in all two hundred fifty and five who subscribed it) I say, whether not onely all these assembled from several Nations, did not unanimously declare and define the Doctrine of Roman Catholicks as Orthodox, and condemn the Protestant as Novelties: But also whether all the Pastors and Teachers at that time in the whole Western Church (except those few who were condemned by this Council, viz. twenty six English Bishops at most, none under that Dignity being permitted to sit as Judges in a General Council) did not accept of the Condemnation, and second it in their National Synods; and Diocesan Assemblies. And moreover

24. Whether those very Doctrines held by the Church of *Rome*, and now oppugned by Protestants, were not most of them some Ages before *Luther*, declared and defined by the most General Councils those Ages would permit; (General Councils, I say, accepted of as such by the generality of Christians) to be Articles of Faith, and consequently Doctrines revealed, and the contrary Tenets to be heretical; none that we know of Dissenting, but onely those few who were condemned in those Councils for Hereticks, and whose Heresies expired almost with themselves. Also

*Tabule Chrono-  
Gualter.*

25. Whether if at present (and much more might be said at the beginning of the pretended Reformation), the Controversie were to be brought to be decided by the superiour and major part of the Pastors and Teachers of the Christian world, and every Division were to stand upon its own grounds, the Church of *England* to her thirty nine Articles; the *Calvinists* to *Calvin's* Multi-

Institutes; the *Lutherans* to *Luther*; and the Oriental Churches each one to their several Tenets (many of which Churches are acknowledged by Protestants to be Heretical) whether, I say, if this were now to be put to votes (supposing each Division would stick to the Principles they now hold) those in Communion with the Church of *Rome* would not, not onely far exceed in in the West, number and Authority any one of these Divisions (which would be sufficient) but even all of them put together; especially seeing the Oriental Churches agree with us in and in the most, if not all, the points in Controversie betwixt us Eastern Churches, and Protestants, as they have often declared both to the *Lutherans* in *Germany*, and in several of their Synods? But if this be not yet sufficient, I would gladly have those who are desirous of their Salvation, to examine themselves

See this fully proved by the *Guide in Controversie*, Disc. 3. c. 8. Disc. 5. c. 16. And by *M. Arnold* in his *Perpetuité de la Foy*, &c.

See the *Bishop of Condom's Exposition*; and the *Papist Represented and Misrepresented*.

26. Whether that aversion which they have hitherto had against Roman Catholicks, was not occasioned by their having them represented as Idolaters, Worshippers of Stocks and Stones, Bloud-suckers, King-killers, persons who think they can have license to sin, to lye, to forswear, to murder, or to do any Crimes so that they do but intend them for the propagation of their Faith, &c. And if their aversion rise from those or the like Ideas, I conjure them as they will answer it at the last day, to enquire impartially into their Doctrines, and see if they do not find that many Doctrines are imputed to Roman Catholicks which they do not hold; and that those which they do hold are miserably calumniated and misrepresented? And when once they have got a clear and true Idea of the Roman Catholick Tenets, I beg of them to enquire

(when rightly Represented)

See this proved at large by *John Brevely*, in his *Protestant Apology*.

27. Whether it be not manifest even by the consent of the most learned and ingenious Protestants, that those Tenets held by the Roman Church, and oppugned by them, were not very anciently taught and practised in the Church, both by the Decisions of Councils, the Writings of Doctōrs and Schoolmēn, the Preachings of Pastors, and the practice of all sorts of People: And that most

and by the consent of learned Protestants very anciently in the Church,



even in the  
4th, 5th, and  
6th Ages ;

whereas the  
Protestant Te-  
nets, as oppug-  
ning Catho-  
licks, had no  
Abettors in  
any Ages, but  
those who  
were condem-  
ned by the  
Church-Catho-  
lick ; and censured  
by the Prote-  
stants of the  
Church of  
England, for  
holding  
known Er-  
rours, or such  
as had no un-  
interrupted  
succession.  
And therefore  
the Catholick  
Doctrines,  
when rightly  
represented,  
ought rather  
to be believed  
as Doctrines  
taught by  
Christ and his  
Apostles, than  
the Church  
accused of Er-  
rour, and Je-  
sus Christ of  
not having  
performed his  
promise ;

most of the the principal of them were taught and pra-  
ctised from the Ages immediately following the third  
and fourth, till these very times , as Learned Protestants  
themselves acknowledge, who endeavour to prove the  
Church to have maintained her Purity onely the first  
three or four hundred years, and after that to have fal-  
len into damnable Errours, though Catholicks shew that  
many of those which they call Errours, were practised  
in the very Apostles time ? ] And also to enquire whether  
it can be made appear, that any known visible Body of  
Pastors and Teachers ever successively declared a dissent  
from all or any of these Doctrines or Practices , or sub-  
mitted not to those Councils, till *Luther's* time, except  
onely some few persons, such as *Wickliffe*, *Huss*, or *Je-  
rosome of Prague*, &c. who were immediately condemn-  
ed as Hereticks by the then visible Church , especially  
here under the Western Patriarch ; who are now cen-  
sured not onely by the Oriental Churches , but by our  
Protestants themselves, for holding other Doctrines which  
they also esteem heretical ; and whose succession as well  
as descent, has been manifestly interrupted.

If therefore these Doctrines, when rightly represen-  
ted, are found to have been publicly taught in the  
Church by the Ancient Fathers, *St. Ambrose*, *St. Jerome*,  
*St. Augustine*, *St. Gregory*, *St. Chrysostome*, &c. by several  
former obliging Councils, [ some of them always esteemed  
General (till of late) by all Scholasticks and other Di-  
vines, in all Countries, ] and practised by all sorts of per-  
sons ; and that no Pastors, Teachers or others were ever  
known to contradict them, but such as are acknowledged  
by all parties to have taught damnable Doctrines in other  
things, and to have been condemned as Hereticks by the  
then visible Church, I ask,

28. Whether we ought not rather to believe, that  
those Doctrines so taught, practised, and continued, were  
revealed Truths , and the contrary Tenets, Errours ;  
than to accuse not onely our Mother-Church of those  
horrid Crimes which must necessarily unchurch her,  
and all Christians for so many Ages , of so great a tepi-  
dity

*Protestant A-  
pology*, Tract.  
2. chap 2. sect.  
3, 4, 5.

*Roman Cath-  
Doctrines no  
Novelties, in  
Answer to Dr.  
Pierce's Court-  
Sermon.  
Guide in Con-  
troversie*, Disc.  
1. ch. 6.

*This is clear in  
it self.*

dity and cowardise (though many millions of them laid down their lives for the defence of the Gospel) that not one of them in any Country durst oppose those growing Errors in Faith, but onely such as were tainted with damnable Doctrines; but also Christ himself of not performing his promise, That his Truth should be like a *light placed upon a Candlestick, like a City seated upon a Mountain; That the Gates of Hell should not prevail against his Church, &c.* And whether it be not more reasonable to believe, that those few persons in this latter Age, who oppose these Doctrines and Practices (moved most of them by Passion, Liberty, and Interest) are fallen into Errors, than thus to condemn Jesus Christ of not performing his Promise; all Christians (eminent for Learning and Sanctity) for many Ages of an hypocritical compliance; the whole Church of being over-run with Errours, and over-spread with more than *Egyptian* darkness; and the very Pastors and Teachers who were appointed by the Holy Ghost to be our Guides, lest we should be led *away with every wind of Doctrine*, of being blind Guides, who led the people hoodwink'd into the precipices of Errour and Destruction, and fell also with them into it by an universal, yet invisible and insensible, change of Doctrine; though all of them professed to make no innovations, but to adhere to what they had been always taught; and declared at the same time, that any change of Doctrine would be damnable?

But since many persons pretend, that because there can be no prescription for Errour, and it being clear that the Church has Erred, they are therefore obliged, whenever they certainly perceive those Errours to forsake them, as they have done those of the Roman Catholic Church. I ask 29. Whether every pretence of Errour be a sufficient motive to disturb the settled peace of the Church? Or, whether there must not be required something more than meer presumptive proofs of its being an Error; [I mean certainty and clear demonstration or Revelation it self,] before

than all Christians for above a thousand years, of hypocritical compliance against their Consciences and Truth; and than the Guides themselves of leading others and running headlong into perdition on:

And this only upon pretended proofs, but no certainty or demonstration;

Mat. 5. 14,  
15. Id. 16. 18.

Eph. 4. 14.

This also is clear in it self. There cannot possibly be made any Reformation of such importance, as the mischief of Schisms is pernicious, &c. Iren. l. 4. c. 62. Apud Rom. Cath. Doct. no Novelties, ch. 19.

Iren. l. 4. c. 62. Apud Rom. Cath. Doct. no

Christ

the seamless Garment of Christ should be rent? For if a pretence of Error will serve, we shall have nothing but new Reformations to the worlds end; The Presbyterian reforming the Protestant of the Church of *England*; the Independent the Presbyterian; the Quaker the Independent, &c. and all upon the same grounds that the Protestant reformed the Roman Catholicks, *viz.* pretended Errors not clearly proved that is demonstrated to be such? For, I ask

Which Protestants cannot pretend to; as acknowledging themselves fallible, and

30. Whether *Luther* and *Calvin*, the present Church of *England*, or any other Protestants, did or do pretend such a clear proof or demonstration for those Tenets they hold contrary to the Faith of the Roman Catholick Church, that no understanding, to which it is sufficiently proposed, and which comprehends the terms, can refuse to assent to it? Or whether they do not rather say, that being fallible they may err, even in what they think a clear proof or demonstration? And if they may err, what security have we that they have not erred, even in their Reformation?

31. Whether therefore to deny these Doctrines, thus declared by the major & superiour part of the present visible Church, to be Doctrines delivered by the foregoing Church in all Ages, as Truths revealed to the Prophets & Apostles, upon no better grounds than these: *We think they are not true, but are not certain of it*, be not to put ones self in to an imminent danger of Error? And whether a Schism *We shall not merit and incur a less-cruel punishment, if we divide the Unity and Plenitude of the Church (the mystical Body of our Lord) than those have done which pierced, mangled, and tore his own Body.* Chrystost. ad Eph. Hom. 11. *Cypr. de Unit. Ecclesiæ.*

onely affirming, that they think they are in the right.

32. Lastly, Whether persons brought up in this Schism, and tainted with these Errors, are not bound in Conscience, as speedily as they can (laying aside all interest and byas'd affection) to seek to be instructed in the Truth, and to return to the bosom of their Mother-Church, which is the Pillar and ground of Truth, against which the Powers of Hell shall never be permitted to prevail?

*To make therefore a Recapitulation,  
I say,*

Q. 1. &c.

**I**F Man could not by any natural ways or means free himself from God's just displeasure, into which Sin had cast him, but that a supernatural Grace was necessary, as a means to obtain a supernatural end: if also this supernatural Grace was purchased by the Merits of a Redeemer, and the price of his most precious Blood who was both God and Man: And further, if this Redeemer, having fully discharged the Debt, would not however have his Merits applied, or the Delinquents freed, unless they rendered themselves capable of that discharge, by the performance of some injunctions laid upon them: It necessarily follows,

That if those Injunctions be not performed, the Delinquents have no just right to challenge a part in his Redemption, but lie still under the lash of his just Vengeance.

But if one, and that the first, of these Injunctions be to have a right Faith in God, and Jesus Christ his Son our Lord and Saviour, inasmuch that without it, it will be impossible to please him, or to be saved: And if it be necessary as to this belief in him, that we also believe all the Truths revealed by him, when sufficiently proposed to us, as so revealed; and that God has given us his Prophets, Apostles, and Teachers, as external proposers of those Truths, to whom he has obliged us to hearken under pain of eternal damnation; it clearly also follows,

That they who do not believe in him, or deny any of the Truths revealed by him, or refuse to hearken to these external proposers appointed by him, are justly excluded from any part in that Redemption.

Q. 2. &c.

If these external Proposers be the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, persons to whom God has declared his Truths, with an obligation

obligation upon them to preach the same to others, and given them the gifts of Miracles as testimonies of their Mission, and of the truth of their Doctrine; then they were certainly obliged to, and did, take a secure, certain, and efficacious means to divulge those Truths to their Posterity; and their Posterity was obliged to submit to those Truths when so divulged.

If this secure, certain, and efficacious means was not *Qu. 10. 11.* by writing only, but first by preaching, and then by *12.* preaching and writing too; it follows that

All persons who heard the Apostles preach, read their Writings, and saw their Miracles, were obliged to believe and give credit to them. And seeing these Truths were to be propagated to Posterity, they also who did not hear the Apostles preach, nor see their Miracles (because they lived in the next Age) but yet were sufficiently inform'd of them by their Predecessors, were obliged to believe those their Predecessors, unanimously testifying the same, and practising it themselves, and this from Age to Age; as also they were obliged to believe those Writings, when truly explicated to them.

But if those Writings contained in them several difficult places; and if some persons out of pride, curiosity, and ignorance, were apt to misinterpret them to their own damnation, and lead others with them into the same precipice. And if again, neither the Originals of those Writings be extant, nor all of them now remaining that were so written; if the true Catalogue of them be controverted, and the very words themselves in danger to be corrupted by the negligence of Transcribers, and ignorance of Translators, we must either say,

That God has provided us some other efficacious *Qu. 17.* means, both to know which are these Writings, what words may be corrupted, and which the true meaning of those words, in things necessary either to the salvation of particulars, or highly convenient for the government of the whole; or that he has not left us a sufficiently secure means to come to the knowledge of those things, which notwithstanding he obliges us to know and practice. If

If to say the last be Blasphemy, we must conclude that God has appointed some other means, and those visible and apparent to all, proportionable to the capacities of all, sure and certain to all.

Qu. 18.

But if no other means can be found securely dictating to us the sense of those controverted places of Scripture, but universal [ written and unwritten ] Tradition from Fathers to Children, and from Pastors to People, not onely in one Age and place, but in all Ages and places, it must necessarily follow,

That when this very Tradition it self is controverted, some affirming it, and others denying it; there must be a means to decide this, which can be no other but the voice of the Church of that Age, spread over the face of the whole world, either unanimously agreeing in one General Council, or Representative of the whole; or else every particular Church making her National Decisions, and sending them to be confirmed and divulged by the Supreme Head.

But if even in those General Assemblies there should happen to be some of those *unstable*, and *ignorant* persons, and others corrupted by them, (as certainly there will be in some Age or other) we must either say,

That there must be some clear and efficacious means to know which are they who thus prevaricate the Doctrine of Christ, & condemn them; or else God has been wanting in necessities, which to affirm, I say, is Blasphemy.

Qu. 19.

If therefore the most prudential natural motive we can find, be to adhere to the sentence of the major part of these Pastors and Teachers, when confirmed by the supreme visible Head; how efficacious must that motive be, when the promise of God is annexed thereto, that when ~~two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midst of them~~: And if when two or three, much more certainly when so many Pastors and Teachers, the Representatives of the whole Church, are assembled in his Name, he having moreover promised ~~to be with them to the end of the world~~; and assured us, that the Gates, or powers, of Hell shall not prevail

Mat. 18. 20.



prevail against his Church; which is the Pillar and Ground of Truth.

If then this manner of deciding Controversies about matters of Faith, has been the universal practice of the Church in all Ages, I see no reason why it should not be continued also in ours. Qu. 20. 21.

And if this way hath been taken, as it is manifest it has in the Council of Trent, I know no reason why these few English Bishops who refused to appear in it, though invited, should be heard before it; or the Doctrines which were condemned by it, and censured as heretical, should not be esteemed as lawfully condemned, as any Heresie that ever yet broke forth in the Church of God. Qu. 22. 23.  
See Considerations on the Council of Trent, by the Guide.

But further, If these very Doctrines were not onely condemned by that Council, but by several others received as General Councils by the then Bishops, Pastors, and People, of not onely England, France, Germany, Denmark, Swedland, and the Low-Countries, but also of all the Western Church, and most of them consented to by the Eastern Bishops; and these Doctrines not onely believed to be Doctrines delivered by the Apostles, but universally practiced both in the East and West: And yet that there was not any uninterrupted succession of Bishops or Pastors to be found contradicting those Councils, opposing those damnable practices, as they call them (which practices are acknowledg'd to have been of a very ancient standing, some above a thousand years) until Martin Luther in Germany, John Calvin in France, and Cranmer in England, except such as held other known Heresies, for which (as well as for these) they were lawfully condemned by those aforesaid Councils; and who had neither an uninterrupted descent nor succession. I say, if these things be granted, (as I think no man of common Learning and Honesty can deny them) what folly is it to adhere to these two or three persons [sufficiently noted for their extravagancies, both in manners and other Doctrines] upon pretences of Gospel-verities, when all those Pastors and Teachers in so many fore-going Ages and places, were  
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Qu. 24. 25.

so far from condemning them, that they practised them as Apostolical Truths, and condemned the contrary Tenets as heretical.

Moreover, if a Protestant, being asked by a Roman Catholick, whether he be infallibly certain, for example, that the Body and Bloud of Christ is not present under the appearance of Bread and Wine, that there is no Purgatory; that it is unlawful to pray to Saints, &c. or whether he dare pawn his Salvation upon the negative assertion, dare not be positive in his Answer, as neither having certain revelation nor demonstration to the contrary; but will only say, I may err, I may be mistaken, but I have reason to think there is none: I say, what madness will it be for such a man to run the hazard of eternal damnation, upon no better grounds than, I think so, or my judgment tells me so: Or for others to follow blindfold such fallible Guides, against such clear, universal and constant Testimonies, and the unerring Authority of the Church.

Lastly, these things considered, how much does it behove all persons, who are desirous to save their Souls, to seek satisfaction in all these particulars, and offer daily this or the like Prayer to God, That he would dart a Ray of his Divine Light into their Souls, and by the infusion of his Graces, free them from Errour and Ignorance, which are the effects of Sin.



A

# PRAYER.

**O** God, thou who art infinite in all Perfections, I thy most unworthy Servant here prostrate at thy feet, beg pardon for all the Sins and Transgressions of my former life. — I am (O my God) heartily sorry for them, because by them I have offended thy most infinite Goodness and Bounty. But seeing my sorrow cannot be esteemed true, unless I purpose to forsake what I grieve to have committed, I do here make a full and hearty resolution (thy Grace assisting me) never wilfully to offend Thee more. Grant, O my Sovereign Lord, that this my Resolution may be acceptable to thy Goodness, and through thy Grace accomplished. But seeing thou hast declared, that without Faith it is impossible to please Thee; I here with all humility, and from the bottom of my Soul, beg of Thee, who art the Father of Lights, and God of Truth, so to enlighten my Mind, that I may see thy Truth, and know what to believe aright; so to enflame my Affections, that I may with Courage practise what thou hast taught me to believe; and to give me such a perpetual Assistance of thy Graces, that I may never fall from thy true Faith and Love, but always  
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*perform thy Holy Will here , that I may perpetually enjoy Thee hereafter ; through our Lord Jesus Christ thy onely Son , who together with Thee and the Holy Ghost , liveth and reigneth One God world without end. Amen.*

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**FINIS.**

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